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SECOND QUARTER - 1952

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THE OOTACAMUND CONFERENCE

ASCENDING A MOUNTAIN—AND COMING DOWN AGAIN !

HERBERT M. ARROWSMITH

THE fourth meeting of the Council of the UNITED BIBLE SOCIETIES was held at Ootacamund, Nilgiris, South India, from February 17-24, 1952. Delegates were present from 15 of the 23 co-operating Bible Societies.

The meeting of the Council was made the occasion for the holding of a Bible Society Conference, and a number of leaders and representative people were invited to come to Ootacamund in order to assess something of the task of the Bible Societies in the new environment which the post-war years had produced.

And thus, to Council and to Conference, some 65 delegates assembled at " Ooty," a place delightful of situation, and one claimed by those entitled to say it, as the Queen of the Hill Stations. For we were 7,500 feet above sea level, towering above the distant plains, and speakers were not slow to draw the parallel that such a lofty situation gave perspective, and indeed should lead to lofty thinking. It was Bishop Jacob who interpreted and developed this parable to us. His opening address dealt with the seven mountain experiences of our Lord Jesus Christ. And our minds, and indeed our souls, were lifted up as we recognised the indentification with Him and His work which we ourselves could experience at Ootacamund and afterwards.

The delegates to Council and Conference were accommodated in three missionary homes. Courteous and careful thoughtfulness shown by the hosts and their staff expressed a Christian fellowship which enveloped the whole occasion with warmth and oneness. The details of the Conference and the general arrangements for its functioning were largely in the hands of Mr. P. Mahanty, General Secretary of the Bible Society of India, Pakistan and Ceylon. He and his staff most efficiently managed so many details with a courtesy and quietness which has set a standard. The Conference's thanks are gladly given to all those who in these and other ways facilitated a meeting for which, in Asia, there had been no exact precedent to follow.

There is a sense in which this Council and Conference made history, and this is no straining of words. For in itself the existence of the UNITED BIBLE SOCIETIES is very new. It is a post-war development, and a very significant one at that. But importance was added to the meeting by the fact that never before had such a Conference been held in Asia to deal with the specific question of the relevance of the Bible and the importance of its distribution. It was a Conference in an Asiatic context, and recognised the recent emergence of Asia, and the contemporary significance of Asia in world affairs.

Further emphasis was added to the Conference by the general setting of India at the time of the Conference. For it was in an independent India that we met, an India which had so recently emerged from colonial status into one of complete self-government and autonomy. It was in an India where the general elections had just been held, where 175,000,000 people had gone to the polls. This had been the largest election in history and its significance is enhanced when it is remembered that probably 80% of that vast electorate is illiterate. Then, too, the Conference was held in the environment of the Church of South India, that new and grand church which had called into being so much vision in planning, so much courage in attempting, and so much patience in achieving.

The Conference, therefore, possessed importance by reason of its setting. But it was important too because of its constituency, because of the people who were there. People do matter. The Conference personalia included 3 Metropolitans and 4 Bishops ; it included men who had suffered at the hands of the enemies of Christ ; it included men whose bodies and minds carried scars, seen and unseen, of incarceration and of persecution.

There were representatives of churches old and new, of interpretations of doctrine and backgrounds of culture both varied and multi-form. Indeed, our backgrounds were almost as varied as our faces. The Conference was a cross-section of the historic Church, and of a universal Church as well.

From these four corners of the earth, England to Australia, Korea to Brazil, we gathered together, in Asia, amidst all the changes and chances of a fitful political scene, to consider that Kingdom which cannot be shaken, and to face up to the needs and demands for the distribution of that Word which endureth for ever.

The general purpose of the Conference became focused on four major themes :

The Use of the Bible in Evangelism

The Church's Use of the Bible and its Responsibility for Bible Distribution

Women's Work in the Bible Societies

Asia's Scripture Requirements—a 5-year Appraisal

The procedure was simple and straightforward. Each day the Conference opened with prayers and Bible reading. These were conducted by the Rt. Rev. G. Sinker, Bishop of Nagpur, and were based on Psalm 103. Morning by morning we saw the various " benefits " poured out upon the believer by the mercy of God. For surely this God of mercy and of grace was He

Who " forgiveth all thine iniquities "

Who " healeth all thy diseases "

Who " redeemeth thy life from destruction "

Who " crowneth thee with loving kindness and tender mercies "

Who " satisfieth thy mouth with good things "

Deeper and deeper were we led into rich and green pastures. Our spiritual heritage became so vivid and so strengthening. And each morning we crossed over from this contemplation into the business of the Conference as the Bishop said : " Oh Lord, open Thou our lips !" and we answered and said : " And our mouths shall shew forth thy praise."

These morning devotional periods were precious to us. They stimulated us all, not to the selfish cultivation of our private, privileged ecstasy, but to a gratitude which overflowed until we felt an inward compulsion to share this inheritance with those who sat in the ignorance of not knowing, or in the hardness of not responding to, the overtures of the inexhaustible grace of God.

I think that it was from these experiences that much of the dynamic of the Conference issued. They were holy moments. We saw again how full of consolation was Holy Scripture ; we saw afresh the satisfaction it conveyed to the awakened and receptive soul. We did not need to enquire as to the relevance of Holy Scripture. We knew it ; it became experiential to us all.

And so to the realities of the Asiatic scene. We turned our eyes from the adoration of the Divine, to the contemplation of the realist and oft-time depressing human scene.

To help the Conference to see clearly, seven introductory and informatory addresses had been prepared. They were as follows :

" The New Era in Asia and its Significance for the Christian," Rev. K. B. V. Yohan Masih

" The Message of the Bible for Asia to-day," Rev. A. Marcus Ward

" The Place of the Bible in the Church," Rev. T. Miyakoda (Japan) and Rev. Dr. C. E. Abraham (India)

" Evangelism through the Bible," Rev. Chandu Ray

" Bible Distribution—a Responsibility of the Church," Rt. Rev. C. K. Jacob

"The New Reader : a Challenge and an Opportunity," Mr. G. P. Khouw.

A general discussion, in full Conference, followed each of these addresses. Speakers from various fields added further information which complemented the general theses presented by these speakers. Questions were asked and answered ; experiences and impressions were exchanged ; illustrations were given of the progress of Bible work in various lands. And as there came this interchange of information, trends became apparent, and the Conference was able to see a number of factors which, whilst not uniform in their pressure, yet merged into a general pattern of the Asiatic scene. This is not the place for a full report of the addresses, but the implications of them can be summarised as follows :—

(*a*) Asia, independent to some degree, and largely facing industrialisation, is marching forward, even though with ungainly steps.

(*b*) There is no large middle class in Asia.

(*c*) There are signs of an increased cordiality on the part of India and South-East Asia towards the West.

(*d*) The proven bankruptcy of the doctrine of the inevitability of human progress has aggravated man's sense of frustration.

(*e*) There are evidences of a religious resolution in Asia, involving a revival of ancient religions, though with a cultural and political accent.

(*f*) But this " revival " is not satisfying Asia's educated youth.

(*g*) There is no country in Asia where there is more than $2\frac{1}{2}\%$ Christian population ; and even this percentage is divisible into Protestant and Roman Catholic proportions.

(*h*) The Church in Asia is placed in an apostolic setting ; and therefore needs an apostolic message.

(*i*) To-day we are therefore living in the climate of the Bible.

(*j*) The Bible, dealing with the whole of man, is the answer to the malaise of Asia which is that of the whole of man.

(*k*) The Bible can move the world, because its centre is outside of the world.

(*l*) The whole Bible is relevant to the whole world.

(*m*) But there is urgency in the relevance. The political environment of Asia is one of turmoil. The China scene is as the warning written on the crumbling walls of Asia. And the fear is real that a one-time wall might

yet be replaced by a curtain, and an iron curtain withal. We became dramatically aware that time, as men count it, was against us. But we had also the assurance that time, as God sees it, was on our side.

With this preparation, the Conference then divided itself into study groups. The Metropolitan of India, the Most Rev. A. Mukherji was Chairman and the Rev. Chandu Ray Secretary of the group which studied the "Use of the Bible in Evangelism." Bishop Jacob as Chairman and Mr. Miyakoda as Secretary were in charge of the group dealing with "The Church's Use of the Bible and its Responsibility for Bible Distribution. Dr. H. Lazarus of Vellore and Mrs. G. Sinker were in charge of the group which discussed the place and work of women in Bible Society work. The fourth group consisted of a secretarial company to whom normally is entrusted the programme of Scripture production.

A good deal of preparatory work had been done by Dr. A. M. Chirgwin and had been circulated beforehand to Conference members. A series of "Background Surveys" completed the general picture of the field. The two groups "A" and "B" had before them a series of questions as a guide to their discussions. These were practical and very realist, and the discussions were earnest and the result of much experience and conviction.

The Conference met in full session to receive and deal with the group conclusions. These, as finally amended and approved, will be available later.*

There came, as a result of this Conference, a strong sense of call and commission of the Bible Societies to accelerate their production of Bibles, Testaments and Portions. It was seen, very clearly, that the Bible Societies could no longer continue without variation the traditional method of colportage. This work needed the able and consistent co-operation of the whole Church.

And thus the Conference issued a call to the Church (see p. 6). It is a message which has conveyed a conviction, ratified and confirmed by every experience of the Conference, that the Bible should be "restored to its rightful place in the preaching, teaching and fellowship of the Church, and in the life of the individual believer." And it is significant that this call to the Church should be sounded out from Asia. Four of the seven signatories to this document are Indian leaders.

Bishop Jacob conducted the final session of the Conference. At its commencement he had reminded us of the significance of the mountain top. At its close he reminded us of the sternness and obligation which rested upon those who, from the mountain, went down to the rigour and realism of the spiritual warfare. Quoting from Hebrews 8 : 5, he enjoined us in the words which centuries before had been a warning to Moses : "See that thou make all things according to the pattern shewed to thee in the mount."

Members of the Conference went up to Ootacamund in a spirit of earnest expectancy. They came down in a spirit of urgent eagerness.

There is so much to do. There may be so little time left in which to do it.

* To be published in the next issue of the BULLETIN.

A MESSAGE TO THE CHURCHES

Ootacamund, South India,
23rd February, 1952

WE, the members of the Council and Conference of the UNITED BIBLE SOCIETIES, met at Ootacamund, South India, in February, 1952, have it laid upon us to share the sense of urgency, and some of the insights which have come to us in our meeting.

Our membership has been drawn from representatives of 25 nations and from almost every branch of the Church of Christ. In spite of many differences of race, culture and doctrine, we have received the blessing of fellowship and oneness in our Lord and His Word. We believe that this experience has profound significance for the fulfilment of our task in the present age.

In the course of surveying the work of the Bible Societies in many lands, the fact that the work and witness of the Church is being challenged in an unprecedented way, by forces throughout the world, working against the will of God, has come home to us with a new reality and has brought us under a compelling conviction of God's command to do our part in meeting the crisis.

We have been confronted, as never before, with the knowledge that nothing but the Incarnate Word of God, as revealed in the Scriptures, will suffice. We cannot, however, escape the conclusion that we Christians are not availing ourselves of all the riches of the written Word. We are constrained, therefore, to impart to you the sense of urgency which the Holy Spirit has laid upon us that everything should be done to restore the Bible to its rightful place in the preaching, teaching and fellowship of the Church, and in the life of the family and of the individual believer.

Furthermore, we believe that God is challenging us, in these difficult days, with new opportunities to use the Bible for the spreading of the Gospel. The bankruptcy of so much of merely human achievement and endeavour has created a void in countless souls which only the Word of God can fill. We have evidence of a new readiness in the non-Christian world to listen to what the Bible has to say. We can rejoice that the advance of literacy among the unprivileged has greatly increased the number of potential readers of the Bible.

In 1954 we shall celebrate the 150th Anniversary of God's gift to the world of the Bible Society Movement. We appeal to you to use this occasion by taking immediate steps to recover, through exposition, preaching, private and corporate study, the understanding of the relevance of the Bible to the whole range of human life, and to make it an opportunity for fuller co-operation with the Societies in distributing the Bible throughout the world.

On behalf of the Council and Conference of the UNITED BIBLE SOCIETIES :

C. K. JACOB, *Vice-President, United Bible Societies.*

A. H. WILKINSON, *Acting Chairman of the Council of the United Bible Societies.*

OLIVIER BÉGUIN, *General Secretary, United Bible Societies.*

ARABINDO CALCUTTA, *Metropolitan of the Church of India, Pakistan, Burma and Ceylon.*

MAR THEODOSIUS, O.I.C., *Orthodox Syrian Church.*

JUHANON MAR THOMA, *Mar Thoma Syrian Church.*

JAMES KELLOCK, *Moderator, United Church of Northern India.*

ON THE WAY TO OOTACAMUND: SOME IMPRESSIONS

ARTHUR M. CHIRGWIN

THE Standing Committee of the UNITED BIBLE SOCIETIES recommended that since I was going to be at the Ootacamund meetings, I ought to seize the opportunity to make certain visits and investigate certain problems on the way. It was accordingly arranged that I should make short stays in Greece, Turkey, Cyprus, Lebanon, Syria, Pakistan and Ceylon, as well as a longer stay in India. As I look back on those varied and interesting visits, certain impressions come at once to my mind.

The first is the complicated nature of the task which the Bible Societies face in the Near East. National feeling has become exacerbated and frontiers are places of acute tension. A complicated frontier has cut Palestine into Israel and Jordan, and the French mandated area has become the rival states of Lebanon and Syria. Colporteurs who formerly moved about freely in the French mandated territory have very great difficulty in passing from Lebanon into Syria or *vice-versa*. A recent visitor said that there was enough inflammable material lying about in the Near East to start another world war. But the Bible Societies have to face not only political, but also ecclesiastical difficulties. The Christian Church is sundered into a multitude of sects. Even the Catholics are divided. There are Roman Catholics, Greek Catholics and Maronites, all acknowledging the Headship of the Pope, but claiming varying degrees of autonomy and often displaying considerable hostility towards one another. In the Near East, at any rate, Catholicism is not the homogeneous unit it is generally supposed to be. At the other extreme, there are divisions and sub-divisions of Protestant fundamentalism. Protestants as a whole in the Near East tend to be theologically conservative, but that has not saved them from the presence and rival activity of the more extreme sections. The Pentecostalists, the Seventh Day Adventists, the Churches of God, the Jehovah's Witnesses and others are present and active. In Government nomenclature and in the popular mind they are all lumped together with the other Protestants as "evangelicals." The longer-established evangelicals, who have hitherto been inclined to lean towards fundamentalism, are getting alarmed at the pushfulness and the unco-operative attitude of the more extreme newcomers. Language differences make further complications, while varying scripts add yet other difficulties. In the same town, or even the same street, there may be two churches of the same denomination. They are not rivals, but they use different languages in their worship. One may use Greek or perhaps Arabic, while the other uses Armenian. The Bible Societies must try to meet the needs of both. The problem of script is even more puzzling, at any rate to the newcomer. In Turkey, for example, the Government requires Turkish to be written in the Roman script. But there are people who can read Turkish only in the Arabic or perhaps in the Armenian, or even in the Greek script. I found one Bible depot that had the Turkish Bible in four different scripts! It makes an extremely complicated problem both for Bible circulation and for evangelism.

My second general impression has to do with the agents and sub-agents of the Societies. For the most part they belong theologically to the more conservative wing of the Church. Yet this does not seem in any way to affect their relationship with Church leaders who do not share their views. I found that Bible Society men in the Near East are without exception on excellent

terms with the leaders of the Orthodox Church, the Maronites and the missionary societies of America and Britain. In every country that I visited they arranged interviews for me with Church leaders of almost every communion, and it was easy to see that they were held in high regard in all the churches. I was led to the conclusion that the Bible is to-day the most unifying factor that exists, and the Bible Society men are making the most of that fact. A year or so ago at the Bible Society's annual meeting in Beirut there were leading representatives on the platform, not only of the various Protestant denominations, but also of the Orthodox Church and the Maronites. Could anything else bring them together like that?

A third impression that remains with me is the value of an attractive looking and well-run Bible bookroom. Some that I saw were excellent both from the point of view of position and of display; others were a bit disappointing. In an increasingly literate world, books are bound to play an increasingly important part. If the Bible is to have its proper share in this new era it must be well produced and well displayed. A good bookroom, in a good position, with a good stock and with a touch of genius in the display of its wares may be a most valuable asset. I saw more than one that was not only a shop but also a reading-room, where people were welcome to read at leisure. Those places were contact-centres of great potential evangelistic value, as well as places for the sale of Scriptures. In the area of the Church of South India I saw two or three excellently placed Bible depots, each of which might well develop into a central bookroom of the diocese and a place where people would foregather, where quiet reading would be encouraged and where contacts could be made. The possibilities are enormous, especially if the bookroom is in the charge of the right kind of man.

My fourth impression related to colporteurs. Wherever I could I watched them at their work, for example in a Moslem coffee-shop or a Maronite hamlet. Where that was not possible I talked with them about their methods and their problems. I did this in places as different as Istanbul, Karachi and Colombo. In one or two places, for example in Damascus, I was able to have a long conference with a group of colporteurs. In consequence of what I have seen and heard, I have a much higher regard for the calling and work of the colporteur than I ever had before. They are generally the spearhead of the Church's evangelistic workers. In one country they are the only ones doing any kind of evangelistic work amongst one large and difficult section of the community. They are, in many cases, resourceful men, with a good deal of common sense and some humour. They need these characteristics for without them they are apt to become stale and lose heart. For the most part they are lonely workers and suffer more than they know from isolation. I am more than ever convinced that they need to be trained for their work; that they should wherever possible work as members of a team, even though the team can meet only occasionally; and that they should attend a refresher course every year. In the countries I have visited recently, the number of colporteurs employed by the Bible Societies has probably decreased in recent years, but the distribution of the Societies has not decreased. This maintenance and even increase of sales with a reduced number of colporteurs is due to the growing practice of voluntary colportage or Bible-selling on the part of pastors, evangelists and lay-folk generally. This steady movement of responsibility for Scripture distribution from the Bible Societies to the churches is in some countries quite marked. Incidentally, it is one of the recommendations of the Ooctacamund Conference and more will be heard of it in the days to come.

My fifth impression has to do with the "closed lands." Some lands, such as Tibet, Afghanistan and parts of Arabia, have always been closed;

others have closed their doors during the last few years. And now that China has joined their number, it means that something like a third of the human race are now cut off from the outer world. It is therefore something more than an important piece of information ; it is a matter of practical Christian urgency. This, I take it, is why the Standing Committee of the U.B.S. asked me to go up to the frontiers of closed lands like Afghanistan, Nepal, Bhutan and Tibet. My report on these visits is for those who invited me to undertake the task, but it can be said here that my attempt to get a clear picture of the problem on these frontiers has convinced me that it is worth-while pursuing the matter further. For example, reliable information regarding regulations governing the sending or taking of books into the closed lands is needed. A survey is also needed of the number and location of nationals of these countries who live outside their own lands. Alongside that, a survey should be made of the location of missionaries of various societies who are near the frontiers of the countries in question, or in the areas where emigrés of these countries now reside. Before an adequate strategy of evangelism can be worked out or a workable scheme of Scripture distribution can be achieved, a good deal of accurate data needs to be accumulated. The door-steps of the closed lands may well prove to be strategic points for the Christian enterprise in the immediate future, and the places on which the Bible Societies should concentrate their best, constructive thought.

THE BIBLE IN ETHIOPIA

Lynn V. D. Ashley*

IN the year 1817 there arrived in Axum, ancient capital city of Ethiopia, a consignment of two hundred copies of the Psalter in the Geez (Ethiopic) language. These books, the first to be published in any African language by the British and Foreign Bible Society, had been three years on their journey from the printers to their destination. Their coming created something of a sensation : never before had such a quantity of printed books been seen in Axum and to king and people, understanding nothing of the printing process, it seemed almost miraculous that so many books should so closely resemble one another that none was to be distinguished from the rest.

Yet neither books in general nor a book of the Bible in particular constituted any novelty to the Axumites. A thousand years before the Bible had been translated into any modern European language, it was already at home in Ethiopia in the language of the people. So much is certain : but it may be that the history of the Bible in this country begins in pre-Christian times. Readers of the New Testament are apt to take it for granted that the Ethiopian eunuch of Acts, chapter viii, was reading Isaiah in the Septuagint version, the version which was the Bible of the early Church. No doubt he was—but ecclesiastical tradition in Ethiopia claims that King Ptolemy of Egypt conceived the idea of having the Septuagint made only because he was already familiar with the existence of the Geez version of the Old Testament. In the literature of the Ethiopian Orthodox Church it is recorded (though, unfortunately, the extant records are not of very early date) that Menelik, said to be the son of Solomon and the Queen of Sheba and founder of Ethiopia's

* The writer of this article wishes gratefully to acknowledge the valuable help given by the Rev. Anton Jönsson and Ato Bemnet, of the National Library of Ethiopia, in supplying information on the literary traditions of the Ethiopian people.

royal line, visited his illustrious father in Jerusalem and brought back with him the original Ark of the Covenant and copies of all the books of the Bible written down to that time, " from the Book of Enoch to the Wisdom of Solomon." From then onwards, according to this line of tradition, there was frequent intercourse between Judaea and the Sabean-Ethiopian kingdom, an intercourse which resulted in the Ethiopians having a Geez translation of all the Hebrew Scriptures so that, when Zerubbabel returned from Babylon with the exiles, the then king of Ethiopia sent to him to say that if the Jews had lost all their copies of the sacred books in the general destruction of Jerusalem, Ethiopian scribes would be happy to replace them . . . . .

Scholars of the Western Church incline to the view that the Geez version as a whole was made from the Septuagint. Even so, it must rank as one of the six earliest known versions of the Bible and it may date from the fourth or fifth century of our era, the beginning of the evangelisation of Ethiopia dating from the middle of the fourth century. However the balance may be struck between Western scholarship and Ethiopian traditions, these traditions testify to the Ethiopians' age-long possession of the Bible and to their deeply-felt veneration for it. For at least fourteen or fifteen hundred years the Christian Scriptures have been known, read and revered in Ethiopia and generations of devout scribes have multiplied manuscript copies of the books of the Bible, maintaining all through the years a fine tradition of accuracy in the copying of the sacred text. As one comes to know something of the Christian provinces of Ethiopia, the impression deepens that while, centuries ago, Geez was still the living language of the people, the Bible—and especially the Old Testament—exercised so great an influence that it has left an indelible mark on everyday life and customs. To-day in these provinces, the Church, through its ministers, touches the daily life and interests of the people at almost every point, though Bible study and teaching is not yet again as common as the leaders of the Church would like it to be.

Racially, linguistically, even religiously, the peoples of Ethiopia (estimated to number about 13,000,000) present considerable variety. Native to the country for many centuries are peoples of Semitic, Hamitic, Bantu, Negro and possibly Indo-European stocks. The Amharas, of Semitic origin, are the ruling people of the Empire, having come out on top in the long struggle for supremacy which for many years constituted the chief factor in internal Ethiopian history. Two interesting groups are the Guragies and the Falashas. The Guragies are thought to be descended from European slaves transported by the ancient Egyptians to Ethiopia, where they worked the country's gold mines. The Falashas (the name means ' Exile ') claim that their ancestors were Jewish immigrants who settled in the highlands to the north of Lake Tana some time before the sixth century B.C. They have the Pentateuch (in Geez) and by its precepts their lives are regulated.

Of the Empire's languages, Amharic, Tigriña (which is also the principal language of Eritrea) and Galliña (in its various forms and dialects) are the most important ; but experts estimated the total number of languages spoken within the country to be not less than thirty. The religious pattern is less complex. The people speaking either Amharic or Tigriña as their native, ancestral tongue are members of the Orthodox Church, which is in spiritual and, to some extent, ecclesiastical fellowship with the ancient Coptic Church of Egypt. This church also has many adherents outside the traditional " church areas " but most of the Gallas and other tribes-people are either Moslems (usually of a rather nominal kind), or pagans. Since foreign missions came to work in Ethiopia, a native Evangelical Church has sprung up into

vigorous life in the erstwhile pagan territories and it is possible that this church will come to have an influence in the life of the country comparable with that exercised by the distinctively Protestant groups in some European countries.

Until towards the end of the last century, the Ethiopian Empire was little more than a loosely organised group of largely independent feudal dukedoms. Effective centralisation of government began under Menelik II (1889-1913). During the reign of the present emperor, H.I.M. Haile Selassie I (his name means "The power of the Trinity"), who came to the throne in 1930, the process of centralisation has been greatly accelerated. As part of the programme, Amharic has been made the official language of the Empire and it has also been enacted that this shall be the only vernacular to be used in schools and colleges. The statute under which the various missions exercise their ministry requires that instruction shall be given, and services conducted, in Amharic even though, in the case of church services, the Amharic may have to be translated into the language of the worshippers. Since 1947 it has been illegal to print or import books in any other vernacular language than Amharic, a ruling that has greatly simplified, though it has limited, the work of the Bible Society which, previously, was circulating the Scriptures in eleven different vernaculars. (Much as one may sympathise with the need to bring about national unity as rapidly as possible, and a common language is a powerful factor in securing such unity, it is to be regretted that hundreds of thousands of people have been expressly debarred by their government from having even so much as a single Gospel in their native speech. No doubt the government's decision to suppress non-Amharic vernacular Scriptures was adopted with reluctance—and it is to be hoped that it will soon be possible to modify the policy.) Meantime, the knowledge of Amharic is becoming widespread throughout the country and literacy is everywhere increasing, thanks to the educational policy of H.I.M.'s Government, under which remarkable progress has been made both in the provision of schools and in the raising of teaching standards. In the higher grades of the schools English is the language of instruction. This emphasis on English is reflected in the fact that in 1951 English came second only to Amharic in the number of Scriptures sold.

Mention has been made of literacy. It is difficult to get reliable figures but, taking the country as a whole, it is probably safe to say that the rate of adult literacy is much under 10% for men and under 1% for women. Some time ago Dr. Laubach visited the country, at the invitation of the Ministry of Education, but no agreement was reached as to the adoption of a simplified alphabet for Amharic, a first step which the experts felt was almost certainly necessary to the undertaking of an effective adult literacy campaign. The ancient Amharic syllabary, in many ways an ideal medium for the accurate transcription of the language, has something over two hundred and fifty characters and the mastering of these requires a sustained effort beyond any comparison with the learning of alphabets of thirty or so easily distinguished letters. However, the Orthodox Church continues to exercise its ancient ministry of teaching boys their letters and the various missions and the Bible Society are eagerly preparing to co-operate with the Ministry of Education in any effort that may be made to spread literacy in the more backward areas of the country.

It need not be emphasised that these various factors (language, literacy and so on) have a direct bearing on Scripture circulation—this is a commonplace of Bible Society experience the world over. From as far back as 1814,

the British and Foreign Bible Society has had a direct interest in the provision of Scriptures for Ethiopia. It was fitting that the first version prepared and sent to the country should be a Geez Psalter. Geez is the language of the Church's liturgy, a liturgy which not only draws freely on the Psalms of David but provides for no less than four readings from the Bible in every celebration of Mass. Since 1824, Amharic has been included in the Bible Society's language list and several editions of the whole Bible have been produced in this tongue. The relations of the Bible Society with Ethiopia during the past century-and-a-third, have from time to time been sadly interrupted by wars and tumults within and on the frontiers of the Empire, but through the years the ties of sympathy and goodwill between the Society and the monarchs and churchmen of Ethiopia have been strengthened, and never more so than during the present emperor's regency and reign. Since 1915 there has been a sub-agency established in the country and in 1925 a Bible House was built and opened in Addis Ababa, the capital.

It has already been said that veneration for the Scriptures is characteristic of Orthodox Ethiopian Christianity. It is a qualified veneration, perhaps, in that it is for the Scriptures in Geez : until recently the idea of a Bible in the common speech has been frowned upon. That this attitude has given way to more liberal ideas is due mainly to two factors : the power of the Word itself when it is put into the language of the people, and the enlightened (and enlightening) policy of the emperor. To H.I.M. Haile Selassie belongs the rare (surely the unique ?) distinction of having initiated no less than three translations of the whole Bible, an overt activity which reveals the central place the Bible is known to have in his private life and devotion. (Those who have the honour of being received in audience by H.I.M. at his office in the Palace cannot but notice that among the books set nearest to the Emperor's hand are copies of the Bible, the books showing the unmistakable signs of much use.) When the latest revision of the Bible in Amharic—which is being produced by a committee set up jointly by the Emperor and the Bible Society—is ready, it will be published " by command of His Imperial Majesty " and it is hoped that it will also have the approval of the Church of which the Emperor is the secular head. The issue of what may in some sense come to be regarded as the Amharic " Authorised Version " may be expected to go far towards the final removal of such prejudice against vernacular Scriptures as still remains.

Whether such a version will help Ethiopian Christians in general to clarify their ideas of what constitutes ' Scripture ' remains to be seen. Amharic versions of the Bible so far circulated by the B.F.B.S. have drawn the criticism : " But this is not the Bible ! " It often happens in the depot in Addis Ababa that a prospective customer will ask to see a Bible, " a whole Bible " ; when he is shown one he turns to the table of contents and counts the number of books listed. Finding the Old Testament with only thirty-nine he exclaims : " But what about the others ? Where is ' Enoch ' ? where is ' Jubilees ' ? " —and he may name others of the apocryphal books (as the Western Church calls them). The absence from the Bible of these books, which for the Orthodox Christian are as worthy of regard as the Law and the Prophets, may very likely lead him to reject *the* Book. Similar experiences are the common lot of anyone who attempts colportage in the Christian areas of the Empire. Yet it would be wrong to lay overmuch emphasis on this. One's admiration for the Church's stand for the Bible and the faith through so many centuries of isolation from the rest of Christendom must preclude unsympathetic criticism by Christians of a different tradition. Positively, we have the satisfaction of knowing that we have been privileged to serve this ancient church, for copies of the Bible, of Testaments and portions published by the

B.F.B.S. are in the hands of the Church's leaders and are to be found in churches and monasteries and the homes of the people up and down the land. For instance, an educationist in the service of the government, says in a recent letter to Addis Ababa : " During the vacation we had a most interesting trip on Lake Tana, visiting a number of churches and monasteries and leaving a number of Amharic Bibles .... which the priests and monks are especially desirous to have." No doubt, as the new Amharic version of the Bible comes to be read and studied, Christian people in Ethiopia will be better able to evaluate what is most worthy out of all the mass of sacred literature available to them. Meantime, secular books in Amharic continue to multiply and here, as in so many other parts of the African continent, there is great need to do everything possible to make the Word of God readily and attractively accessible to the people.

In bringing this article to a close, further reference (altogether too brief to do any justice on the subject) should be made to the evangelical " Bible churches." A decade or so ago, a few small and scattered groups of believers were all there was to show for the devoted labours of the missionaries who had sought to evangelise the pagan and Moslem tribes of the southern provinces. To-day " the little one has become a thousand " and converts are being made in such numbers that the pastoral care of them constitutes no small problem for the rapidly expanding church. Scenes of New Testament fervour and power characterise this remarkable situation and—the Bible is there ! Not only there but, under God, a chief means to what has been and is happening.

The Bible has had a long history in Ethiopia : yet those observers who know and care most are united in believing that the present generation will see the Word of God take a more central and vital place in the life of the varied peoples of the Empire than ever before. For the whole of Africa, Ethiopia is in more than the merely physical sense " a city set upon a hill " and no limit can be set to the influence for good that could be exercised throughout the continent, and beyond, by a Christian nation with the Bible as in every sense the people's Book.

NEWS FROM ALL THE WORLD

Under this heading we do not intend to give only information of the Bible Societies, but we also want to include such facts as may or should have a bearing on Bible Society work. This information should therefore not only tell us what other societies are doing, but should also help us to apprehend the whole realm of our common responsibilities and should lead us to think out how best we may extend our own activity in the future, in such a way as to fulfil our calling to the utmost.

Belgium

A report from the *Belgian Bible Society* indicates that more than 500 young men and women from the senior classes of the middle and training schools in La Louvière, visited the Society's exhibition in that town in January. Another exhibition was arranged to follow this in Jumet, near Charleroi, and it was expected that large numbers of scholars would also attend.

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On 18th December, 1951, a copy of the Bible in French, together with a copy of the first edition of the Bible in Luba-Katanga, one of the languages

of the Belgian Congo, were presented to the King of the Belgians (see BULLETIN No. 9, p. 30). In replying to an address read to him on behalf of the Belgian Bible Society and the Congo Missionary Council, the King stressed the importance which he attaches to the Bible as a link between " all those who believe in Jesus Christ."

Bolivia

The Bible Society agency in Bolivia employs only one regular colporteur, so most Scriptures are distributed through missionary groups and local churches. The figures in this connection for the year 1951 were :

	Bibles	Testaments	Portions
By churches, missionaries, etc. ...	6,089	10,922	45,449
By 1 colporteur and volunteers ...	169	263	7,038

Gifts from the local churches have greatly increased in the last three years, and most of them now celebrate Bible Sunday with enthusiasm.

Burma

The following information has been received in a news-letter from the Rev. H. C. Willans, secretary for the B.F.B.S. Burma agency, with headquarters in Rangoon :

" Bible Sunday was observed this year by Anglican churches on the second Sunday in Advent and by other churches on 12th August. Letters to the churches about Bible Sunday were sent out in eight languages, and over 300 churches remembered us in their prayers and sent us their contributions . . . . . .

" On August 12th the Secretary broadcast a Bible Sunday address in the Rangoon Radio Programme ' The Church Speaks.' He has not been able to tour during the year but he has preached in ten Rangoon churches and spoken at a Baptist missionary conference . . . . . .

" Once again our income from contributions has surpassed previous records. The total for the year is Rs. 21,744, which exceeds last year's record figure by Rs. 3,000 and is more than four times the pre-war average . . . .

" We are happy to report an increase of 60% in circulation. The total for the year is 52,700 compared with 31,076 last year, and is much higher than in any year since the war. The average pre-war circulation was 104,000 books out of which 89,000 were sold by colporteurs. Thus the average number of books sold directly from the Bible House was only 15,000. This year's direct sales are over 39,000 and it is notable that they include larger numbers of Bibles and Testaments than ever before in the history of the Bible Society in Burma. Over 23,000 Bibles and Testaments have been sold in 1951. Detailed figures are as follows : 6,631 Bibles, 16,442 New Testaments and 29,627 Portions. 13,303 of these books (mostly Portions) were sold by colporteurs . . . . . .

" Improved communications have made our work of distribution vastly easier. We have sent many large shipments to Upper Burma by river steamer, and frequent consignments by road to the Shan States, as well as countless parcels by post. In spite of disturbed conditions in parts of the country, all our books have gone through safely . . . . . .

" Four colporteurs have been at work throughout the year and three of them have sold about 4,000 books each. Another, working in a thinly populated area, where travel has been difficult, reports 1,235 books sold. Our Karen colporteur is still cut off by the rebellion and we have no further news of him. The colporteurs' reports continue to emphasise that they are well received wherever they go ; those to whom they offer the Scriptures are more open to hear and to read about the Christian religion than they used to be. This is confirmed also by missionaries who spend time in Scripture distribution . . . . . .

" Now that the shortage of Bibles and New Testaments has been largely overtaken and we are building up our stocks, we are able to give more attention to the evangelistic aspect of our work. We have urged that all preachers should keep a stock of Gospel portions for distribution, and many are doing so. We are seeking through the Burma Christian Council the fuller co-operation of the churches in the distribution of the Scriptures . . . . . "

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The B.F.B.S. agency in Rangoon is printing 5,000 new copies of St. Mark's Gospel in the Burmese tongue. The version which will be used is the Judson version.

Canada

The Central Board of the *B.F.B.S. in Canada* has arranged to supply, through the London Bible House, a copy of the New Testament to each man in the Brigade of Canadians who have lately reached Europe to be stationed in Germany. The new Testaments are excellently printed and bound in khaki.

Ceylon

The Ceylon government has sent to educational institutions throughout the island an announcement that religious instruction is to be introduced into all state and state-aided schools. In future, says the announcement, teachers will be expected " to know not only their religion, but also how to to teach it." Christian circles welcome the decision, since it also assures freedom to teach the Scriptures without hindrance. Spokesmen for the Buddhists, who constitute nearly 90% of the population, say they expect the government's move to give added impetus to their drive to revive the "national culture."

Chile

A report from the Secretary of the Bible Society Agency in Chile includes the following information :

" Our reports from Chile over the last few years show how we depend upon the evangelical churches and missionary groups for distribution. Last year (1951) through churches and missionary channels we sold 11,471 Bibles, 13,393 Testaments and 55,500 Scripture Portions, while our four colporteurs sold 1,264 Bibles, 6,999 Testaments and 27,553 Portions. Of the year's total circulation of 180,964 Scriptures, 20% were sold by colporteurs, 36% at the Depot, 44% to missions and pastors.

" Financial support is increasing year by year and Bible Sunday is becoming the outstanding event in the Evangelical Church's calendar year.

" The cumulative effect upon the government and the Roman Catholic Church is that Protestants are in Chile to stay, not as foreign intruders, but as bringing a mode of life and worship which many Chileans have found deeply satisfying and desirable and which the Chileans will support with their lives and material resources. While Chile is not predominantly Protestant, it is showing a hospitality to Protestant ideas and a readiness to learn Protestant ways that bespeak a fuller, richer cultural life and a more satisfying religious content, both for Protestants and for Catholics, in the future."

China

An indigenous Christian Church, free from all links with churches abroad, is being built by Chinese communists, according to a newspaper " People's China," published in Pekin. Included in this newspaper is an article by Wu Yao Tsung, who is stated to have been connected with the Y.M.C.A. in China for more than thirty years, and to have been one of the founders of the Christian Reform Movement, which purposes to free the Christian churches in China from their dependence on funds from abroad. He writes : " While the communists do not believe in religion, the Government takes the stand that if religion serves the people and is not against the people, it should not be discriminated against and should be regarded as a full partner in the united front which is building the new China."

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A Council on Christian Literature for Overseas Chinese has been established in Hongkong, with the Rev. Frank Short as Secretary, to meet the needs of the 20 million Chinese living in South-east Asia who have been cut off from sources of Christian literature in their own language.

The formation of this Council was recommended by the Christian Literature Conference, organised by the World Council of Churches and the International Missionary Council in Singapore last December. Twenty-one delegates from the Protestant churches of Burma, Ceylon, Hongkong, India, Indonesia, Japan, Malaya, the Philippines, Thailand, Great Britain and the United States were present at the meetings, and the Malayan Christian Council was host to the gathering.

The conference recommended that the Council on Christian Literature for Overseas Chinese, which has no connection with any group or society in China, be recognised as the agency responsible for promoting Christian literature among Chinese outside China, and that branches of the Council be established in countries with large Chinese communities. A survey is being prepared of the overseas Chinese communities, listing data concerning the Christian churches in each area.

Denmark

The Union of Christian Commercial Travellers in Denmark has distributed 300 Bibles in bright leather covers in Copenhagen hotel rooms. This brings the total number of Bibles in Danish hotels to 13,000.

East Africa

The Rev. F. J. Bedford, secretary for the B.F.B.S. in East Africa, has sent in another report on the progress of the work in his field. Since his last letter in April, 1951, he has covered six thousand miles in two great journeys,

quite apart from numerous shorter journeys. He has visited the wild areas of Southern Tanganyika, the islands of Zanzibar and Pemba with their seemingly immovable facade of Mohammedanism, the hot coastlands of Kenya, the low-lying hills, deep greenery and marshlands of Uganda, as well as the mountainous country of Ruanda-Urundi. In all these travels, Mr. Bedford met Africans of scores of tribes, many with a growing national consciousness, all at different stages of a modern revolution and eager as never before for higher standards of living and education. Mr. Bedford writes :—

" One is proud of what the Bible Society has achieved throughout these vast areas, but one cannot be complacent, for the need is still great, and increases as more people press forward into literacy. We cannot pause in our work until all men everywhere, can read the Scriptures in their own languages.

" The emphasis is now on the completion of the whole Bible. There are still some tribes who have not yet received the complete New Testament, some in fact who have only a Gospel. They must be helped, but the task now before us is to see the Bible completed in the languages of the main tribes.

" In this aim very satisfactory progress can be reported from Kenya. This year the Old Testament has come into the hands of the Kikuyu tribe, the largest in East Africa. The good news has arrived that the MSS of the Kamba Old Testament is complete, and is being typed. The long awaited Luo Old Testament is passing through the page-proof stage. The day is not far distant when these leading tribes will have the whole Word of God . . . . . .

" Everywhere I go in East Africa, people ask about the Swahili Bible, and are especially attracted by the fact that it contains references. Everywhere the leaders of the African Church are becoming more keen on intensive Bible study, and amongst the most significant things I have seen in every Territory in East Africa are the Bible Schools, from the simple gatherings of village teachers and evangelists eager to learn, to the new theological colleges which are gradually developing . . . . . .

" During the weeks in Ruanda-Urundi two things impressed me very much. The first was the way in which people are being called to follow Jesus Christ through Revival, and the second, the remarkable school building programmes on the Protestant mission stations. Both of these are bound up with our work as distributors of the Holy Scriptures.

" In the first place, there is the great Spiritual Revival which has become synonymous with the name of the Ruanda Medical Mission. This is one of the most remarkable religious movements in Africa. It is not a new thing, for it commenced back in 1929, and has been going on ever since. The Spirit of God has moved in the hearts of a multitude of people, and their lives have been changed . . . . . Surely it is not an accident, that all these men and women who have found their Saviour, should be carrying well-worn, regularly-used, carefully-marked copies of the Ruanda New Testament, or the Gospels and Epistles in Kirundi, both published by our Society . . . . . .

" Secondly, I was impressed by the great plans which are being made by the Alliance of Protestant Missions for extension of educational facilities. Every mission I visited had big building programmes ; schools were in the course of erection which in the next few years will have a profound effect upon the proportion of literates in the population. The Bible Society, planning for the future, will need to watch these developments and the con-

sequent need for more and more Bibles. Although this may also be true of so many parts of Africa, Ruanda-Urundi will have a special claim, for it is the most heavily populated country in East and Central Africa .....

" In the remainder of this letter I should like to tell you briefly of the progress in Auxiliary work and Colportage. Since the last letter was written, Bible Society Auxiliaries have been established at Eldoret, in the Highlands of Kenya, at Dar-es-Salaam, the capital of Tanganyika, and at Matana, nestled in the hills of Southern Urundi ..... We now have six Auxiliaries in East Africa, all of them inaugurated during the last two years. They have four definite points to their programme. To encourage Bible Reading and all the helps thereto ; to organise and supervise colportage work in each area ; to spread news about the great work being done by the Bible Society and finally to raise financial support ....."

Mr. Bedford points out that, whereas formerly the African churches in East Africa have been at the ' receiving end,' opportunities are now being given to the people to see something of the world-wide challenge of the work and increased contributions are beginning to come in. Two years ago the total of the year's free gifts from East Africa was £265, in 1950 it rose to about £460 and by December, 1951, the Auxiliaries had already contributed £700.

The report concludes : " It is a great privilege to share the hopes and fears of such a devoted body of people as the missionaries in Africa, to be able to pass on to them information picked up elsewhere, and then to pray together about all these problems ; these are hours which make these travels times of enrichment and mental adventure."

Egypt

The Ministry of Education in Cairo declared recently that Christian pupils in government schools will henceforth be assured of special religious instruction during the time when their Moslem school-mates receive their own instruction in the Koran.

Hitherto, Christian pupils in government schools were left without any religious instruction while their Moslem classmates attended their Koranic studies.

Since most Christian pupils belong to the Coptic Orthodox Church—the oldest and biggest Christian body in Egypt—the religious instruction will be according to Coptic teachings.

The Ministry of Education has asked that Christian schools, in turn, ensure the religious education of their Moslem students according to the curriculum prepared by the Egyptian government.

England

The Production Department of the *British and Foreign Bible Society* reports that, in spite of a paper situation held to be more critical than at any time in the present century, during 1951 the Society published from London :

	1,470,291	Complete Bibles
	732,784	New Testaments
	1,426,677	Portions
Total :	3,629,752	Volumes

The National Institute for the Blind have published in Moon Type for the blind the B.F.B.S. story of Mary Jones, the young Welsh girl whose efforts early in the 19th century to secure one of the rare copies of the Welsh Bible then in existence led the Rev. T. Charles of Bala in Wales to make suggestions which led to the founding of the B.F.B.S. in 1804. For those who have not acquired the Braille system, the Moon method is a rapid and easy way of learning to read.

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The B.F.B.S. and the American Bible Society are arranging with Professor A. S. Herbert to undertake the editing and preparation for the Press of the revision of the English volume of the Historical Catalogue of Printed Bibles.

France

In its Report for 1951, the Société Evangélique de Genève indicates how it was discovered with amazement that at the Council of Europe, gathered together at Strasbourg, a member of the Committee who had wished to refer to a biblical text which he wanted to use during a meeting, found out that the extensive library of the Council did not contain a Bible. The President of the Reformed Church of Alsace and Lorraine was informed of this lack, and he took the initiative in supplying a copy of the precious volume.

Germany

The *Stuttgart Bible Society* has announced that by far the greatest demand in Germany is now for the complete Bible, whereas in former years people wanted the New Testament. Many now ask for the Old and New Testaments together with the Apocrypha. In November last year, the Stuttgart Society distributed 28,315 complete Bibles as against 8,754 New Testaments.

*

The Stuttgart Bible Society is again producing film-strips, as it did before the war, which are intended to help in the understanding of the Bible. Each film-strip has a commentary which is so chosen that it may speak clearly and with force to the congregation. The titles of the film-strips which have appeared so far are : " From the Bible of Jesus to the German Bible " (65 pictures) ; " God's Working in the History of the Bible " (50 pictures) ; and " Is the Bible Trustworthy ? Evidence of the discoveries in papyrus and parchment " (56 pictures).

■

In order to gain the interest of modern-minded men who have no real regard for the Bible, the Stuttgart Bible Society is about to publish some editions in quite modern style. There are many people who would like to have a copy of the Book of books on their shelves to complete their library, but they do not want it in the old form of binding. The Bible Society desires to serve these people and hopes that when they have a copy of this modern Bible, even if it is out of only superficial regard, they may perhaps—through the working of the Holy Spirit—be moved by some word and brought back to the Way of God.

■

The seventh edition of the Biblia Hebraica has now been published by the Bible Society in Stuttgart and the most valuable new manuscripts which were discovered near the Dead Sea were used in the work. These discoveries

have also been collected in a special volume, which is being made available at a small additional cost to those who already possess the Biblia Hebraica.

*

The centenary is being celebrated this year of the beginning on 22nd August, 1852 at a conference in Elberfeld, of systematic Bible study amongst Protestant youth in Germany. This movement spread gradually to other Protestant youth groups and finally to the great church societies. In the years of persecution this Bible reading was extended even more, and a scheme was set up to cover the Gospels in a four-yearly cycle. The committee responsible for these studies has, for many years past, been led by Dr. Erich Stange, and latterly Roman Catholic Bible work in Germany has followed a similar plan.

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Kirchenrat D. Johannes Steinweg, of the *Niederhesse Bible Society* in Kassel, organised an ecumenical Bible Mission Week in Kassel from February 17-21, the titles of the different addresses being : " Joy in the Bible ;" " What to do with the Bible in the home "; " The Bible in the office, place of work and public life ;" " The reliability of the Bible " and " Experiences with the Bible."

Kirchenrat Steinweg reports : " By far the majority of people who have been baptised in Germany are not only alienated from the Church to-day, but also from the Bible. Even in truly devout Christian circles the Bible is read very little. Bible reading is often replaced by snippets on a calendar, and although this is understandable, it is nevertheless more important for people to read the Bible itself. Something is being achieved in this direction in our young people's work through Bible reading in evangelical societies, but modern man needs to be brought right into contact with the Bible as a whole—in its origin, in its fundamental ideas, in its personalities and in its pictures. It is not so much edification as factual information that is required. Any Bible talks during a Mission Week must have as their object helping people to read the Bible for themselves . . . . . "

Greece

The Rev. Dr. A. M. Chirgwin, U.B.S. Research Secretary in Geneva, visited Greece on his way to the Council Meeting in India and he has given the following brief account of his time there :

" Within twenty-fours hours of arriving in Athens, three professors in the University, all of them laymen, told me that they believed that a revival of religion was on the way." Dr. Chirgwin said it is encouraging to see the place that the Orthodox Church is now giving to the Bible. " There are 3,000 Sunday Schools ; the Bible has become a best-seller. Twenty years ago the Student Christian Movement exerted little influence in the University ; to-day it is studying the Bible with thoroughness and enthusiasm.

" One of the most interesting developments I have come across is the organisation of Bible study in the prisons of the country. The principal Prison Chaplain told me that there were fully 2,000 prisoners in various parts of Greece taking part in regular Bible study. I spent a morning at two of the prisons, one for women and one for men. Both were prisons for serious offenders . . . . . Yet first rate Bible study was going on week by week. The Chaplain is working to a plan, and those who are to join are taken through a course of Bible reading which is carefully prepared . . . . . "

Indonesia

In reply to the letter addressed in the name of the Netherlands Bible Society, the British and Foreign Bible Society and the National Bible Society of Scotland, to the inauguration meeting of the *Indonesian Bible Society* (BULLETIN 9, pages 33-34), the following report has been received:

" On 28th September, 1951 the Board of the Indonesian Bible Society was inaugurated . . . . . .

" We are glad to be able to state that reactions to the leaflet which we sent out in 1951 soon came in. Applications for membership of the new Society are being received every day. It is our intention, in future, to pass these applications on to the auxiliaries where they exist, and in places where there are no auxiliaries at present, we hope to establish them with the assistance of the members.

" The Bible House in Djakarta (Balai Alkitab) at Dj. Teuku Umar 34, will be in charge of administration. The Indonesian Bible Society had a working capital when it came into existence, because of the collections received in 1950.

" Although the Society should be able to pursue the full task of a Bible Society, in the first years of its existence it will be engaged mainly in inland organisation : the bringing in of new members, the establishing of new auxiliaries and distribution and colportage in co-operation with the churches.

" The foreign co-operating Bible Societies have promised to supply a Bible-car some time in the future. This car, which will be specially equipped, will travel around in particular areas in co-operation with the churches concerned. The equipment will be for propaganda and instruction, but at the same time some stocks of Scriptures for sale and colportage will be included. We intend to work out these plans further as well as to consider obtaining suitable films for propaganda and instruction . . . . . .

" We want to express our great thankfulness for your interest in the birth of the Youngest Bible Society of the World."

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From 17th-31st May, 1952, a regional conference of Bible translators will be held in Djakarta. The conference will be attended by all the translators working in Indonesia, one European linguist in the service of the Indonesian government, the Rev. W. J. Bradnock and Dr. E. A. Nida, Secretaries for Translations of the British and Foreign Bible Society and the American Bible Society, Mrs. Nida and two teachers of the Theological High School. Representatives of some ecclesiastical and missionary bodies interested in the work of Bible translating and Christian literature have also been invited to attend.

The main purpose of the conference is threefold. Firstly, to enable the translators to profit by one another's experience ; secondly, to try to reach unity of outlook, in order that the unavoidable differences between the translations in one area be reduced to the minimum ; thirdly, to seek a form of co-operation amongst the translators on the field, as well as between them and the advisory committees in the Netherlands.

This conference is of a regional character, as the Bible Societies are of the opinion that a number of problems can best be tackled, not on an international, but on a regional level. Some of the findings will probably have a

wider application. That is one (amongst many) reasons why the attendance of the Translations Secretaries of the A.B.S. and the B.F.B.S. was thought advisable. They will be able to judge the usefulness of those findings and pass them on to translators in other areas.

Israel

The Rev. M. Solheim, Bible Society Sub-Agent in Israel, reports that from November 1st, 1950 to October 31st, 1951, 19,014 copies of the Scriptures were circulated, including 7,400 Bibles. This however, does not reflect the full situation. Had it not been for the short supply, they could have sold many more, particularly Hebrew Scriptures. Mr. Solheim indicates that there were months when he had not a single copy in hand, and he was sorely troubled to have to send inquirers away. Fortunately, several consignments of books have reached the agency recently and these are being carefully rationed for just distribution all over the country.

*

Professor E. Sukenik of the Hebrew University in Jerusalem has announced the discovery of some more ancient Bible manuscripts in a cave near Jericho, close to the place where similar scrolls were found in 1947. (See article in BULLETIN No. 1, pages 40-42).

Professor Sukenik, who is a leading authority on Bible manuscripts, declares that the new finds will open a fresh era of biblical research. It is likely that further discoveries may be made, if it is possible to investigate systematically almost 100 such caves in the Jericho area.

Japan

Mr. J. C. F. Robertson, the representative of the B.F.B.S. in Japan, has been studying the question of whether the New Testament is in truth a " best seller " in that country at the present time. His figures have been carefully checked by the Chairman of the National Christian Council and the Christian Literature Committee in Japan. Mr. Robertson reports :

" Not only are the Japanese a people 99% literate, but they are also assiduous readers. The daily press of the country is well organised and powerful and the three outstanding newspapers—the ' Asahi,' the ' Mainichi ' and the ' Yomiuri ' — have daily circulations of 4,400,000, 4,000,000 and 3,000,000 copies respectively. Great numbers of monthly periodicals of every kind exist likewise, with circulations varying from 600,000 to 60,000 copies. The number of books published, equally, increases incessantly.

" In such circumstances, therefore, it is no light claim to say that the New Testament is a ' best seller.' The statement is true, nevertheless, and fully substantiated. For the past three years the average circulation of the New Testament in Japan has been 500,000 copies yearly. In 1949 it was 467,135 copies ; in 1950 it was 671,009 copies and in 1951 that number has been surpassed, although the actual figure has not yet been received . . . . .

" There are many popular translations current in the country at the present time, some of the most widely-read being ' Kon Tiki ' (40,000 copies) ' Riddle of MacArthur ' (40,000 copies), ' About Marriage ' (40,000 copies), ' Saipan '—a war story (100,000 copies). The New Testament, therefore, with an average yearly circulation of 500,000 copies, tops the list every time.

Moreover, the ' best sellers ' in secular literature change from year to year, whereas New Testament sales remain steady and constantly increase . . . . . ."

In addition to this information, the B.F.B.S. reports that the sales of the complete Bible exceed those of any other religious book—of any religion —in Japan to-day. In 1949, 34,633 Bibles were sold ; in 1950, 36,565 ; and the 1951 figure is expected to be even higher.

Buddhist literature is practically non-existent at present. The most popular Buddhist commentary by Shoko Watanabe is out of print. It seems, indeed, that Buddhism and Shintoism leave it to the commercial press to estimate popular interest and demand in determining whether or not they will print. A popular historical novel, the story of a Buddhist priest, sold 50,000 copies, and that was as far as non-Christian literature ventured into the publishing field of late years.

*

Mr. Soichi Saito, National General Secretary of the Japanese Y.M.C.A. Movement, has been representing the Japanese Government before the United Nations Prisoner-of-War Commission. On his way to Geneva, Mr. Saito renewed contacts with the Y.M.C.A. leaders in the Philippines and at the International Older Boys' Camp in Australia, where he reported to them on the many encouraging post-war developments in Japan. Among a wide variety of significant activities, he stressed the importance of the Y.M.C.A.-sponsored lunch-hour Bible Study Groups which already have over 1,500 members. Meeting in offices, factories, or Y.M.C.A. buildings, these groups are to be found in the offices of the Ministry of Finance, the Ministry of Welfare and the Metropolitan Police Force, in Banks and in a wide variety of educational and commercial centres. These groups, which reach both Christian and non-Christian, are but part of the evidence of the nation-wide quest for new spiritual foundations in Japan.

*

One day's advertisement in three leading newspapers of Western Japan recently brought 2,200 inquiries concerning Christianity into the Newspaper Evangelism office of the United Church of Christ in Japan.

This response, as large as the pre-war average for a whole year's advertising and solicitation, indicates a vast new opportunity for Christian missions in Japan.

The United Church of Christ in Japan includes almost all major denominations working in that country, and its membership includes about two-thirds of all Japanese Protestant Christians.

*

The Christian Literature Crusade is bringing out a special edition of 10,000 copies of the new modern translation *Kogotai* of St. John's Gospel in Japanese (see BULLETIN No. 5, page 29) in a fairly large type and an acceptable binding.

Madagascar

It has been estimated recently that in Madagascar, 130 years after the first Protestant missionaries began their work, there are 1,500,000 Christians (Church members and adherents) out of a total population of four millions. Protestants number 825,000 and Roman Catholics 700,000. These are by no means equally spread all over the island, as the great majority come from the Merina and Betsileo tribes.

Mexico

Five regional Christian Education Institutes to be held early in 1952 will afford local Sunday and vacation Bible school teachers of Mexico intensive courses on such matters as methods of teaching children of different ages, the use of audio-visual aids, worship by children, ways of making the Bible real to boys and girls, story telling, and the leadership of church youth . . .

Plans for the conferences were made at a recent meeting of the Advisory Committee on Christian Education in Mexico City, when reports were received on the distribution and usage of the Bible Pictures for Children Everywhere. These had been sent to Mexico by the World Council of Christian Education and Sunday School Association, as distributing agents, in a project shared by the Church children in the United States and Canada under the leadership of the Children's Work Section of the National Council of Churches in the U.S.A. In spite of the high import duty on the gift pictures, payment of which was provided locally, they had been distributed throughout the Republic and immediately put to use as teaching aids in Sunday and vacation schools and as gifts to children, as a token of international Christian friendship.

Netherlands

The *Netherlands Bible Society* reports that 109,000 copies of the New Dutch translation of the Bible, which was finished last summer, have just come off the press : 52,000 copies of a small ' house ' Bible and 57,000 copies of the large-size pocket Bible. The selling prices for these books are respectively f.9.00 and f.4.80.

76,000 copies were sold to subscribers before publication. Preparations for the reprinting of a further 85,000 copies have already been made.

As well as these, two other editions of a small-size pocket Bible will be printed : 50,000 copies of a cheap small-size pocket Bible for distribution purposes (approximately f.4.20 each), and 24,000 of a micro-pocket Bible on India paper (approximately f.5.60 each).

In the Bible House in Amsterdam on 16th January, this new Dutch version of the Bible was offered to delegates of the Dutch churches. After the official presentation to the churches (which included the Salvation Army and the Christian Scientists) by the chairman of the Netherlands Bible Society, Professor Dr. W. F. Grosheide, a service was held in the Mennonite Church of Amsterdam, where pastors of the Netherlands Reformed, the Lutheran and the " Gereformeerde " churches officiated.

North Africa

The Rev. James Roe, Secretary for the B.F.B.S. in Algiers, has reported that 1951 was a very encouraging year for Bible work in his agency. Circulation figures were : 3,462 Bibles, 6,069 Testaments and 58,787 Portions, making a total of 68,318 copies of the Scripture, the highest figure since the war.

It was possible during the year to re-start Bible tours with the caravan and two very successful journeys were made in the winter of 1950-1951 in Algeria. In the Spring of 1951 an extensive tour was carried out in Tripolitania and this provided an outstanding opportunity for Bible colportage, as many as 3,500 copies of the Word of God being distributed during the trip—most of them in Italian and Arabic. (See BULLETIN No. 7 page 16).

Gifts received during the year from the whole agency (Algeria, Tunisia, Tripolitania and Morocco) amounted to Fr. 402,476 and Mr. Roe is hoping that this will increase next year. Bible Sunday will take place on March 9th and an appeal has been sent to all Bible Society supporters, asking them to observe it with renewed enthusiasm and generosity this year.

Philippines

The American Bible Society has donated Bibles to the 523 prisoners in the provincial jail at Lingayen (Luzon, P.I.) who have been baptised as a result of the ministry of Emilio Lapitan, lay preacher who has been detained in the jail since June, 1947.

*

The Far East Broadcasting Company's radio station in Manila broadcasts the Gospel in thirty or more languages, seventeen hours a day, for seven days a week. Within a radius of 2,200 miles of the station live one-half of the human beings on earth. Not all have radios, but many do, and this radio ministry for Chinese and others in Southeast Asia is a wide open door.

Sweden

The Secretary of the *Swedish Bible Society* has sent in the following details about the new tentative revision of the Swedish New Testament and Psalter :

" At the Church Assembly in Stockholm in 1951, several Swedish Church leaders and theologians proposed that a tentative revision of the New Testament and Psalter be made.

" There are certain shortcomings in the present translation to which attention has been drawn on not a few occasions. They should not be exaggerated ; the Swedish authorised version of 1917 is, on the whole, worthy of high esteem. Its style, however, is slightly paraphrastic and scarcely does justice to the language of the Bible. But it is easy to understand and has made even complicated trends of thought, such as in the Epistles, intelligible to everybody, and this could certainly not be said of the earlier translation of 1703, nor of the tentative renderings that followed. But since 1917 we have acquired a clearer insight into the thoughts of the biblical authors, a better idea of the content and form of the Bible books, a deeper conception of the nature of Bible Greek and a different view of the relation between the written and the spoken language. All this seems to motivate a tentative rendering of the New Testament, and it also seems desirable to add the Psalter to such a revision.

" The motion was referred for preparation to a committee, the chairman of which was Archbishop Yngve Brilioth. The committee passed the recommendation unanimously, and the Assembly did so without much debate. Amongst the signatories of the motion were Bishops Gustaf Aulén, Elis Malmeström and Anders Nygren, and Deans Ivar Hylander and Gösta Lundström.

" Now it is left to the Swedish government to decide if the revision is to be carried out and to appoint experts for the work. Swedish theologians and humanists are well equipped for this task of translation."

*

In connection with the Centenary of the Swedish Sunday School Movement last year, a Bible was presented to the five-year old Swedish Crown Prince Carl-Gustaf, grandson of King Gustaf Adolf VI. This Bible was a gift from the Swedish Sunday School Council, which is composed of representatives of the Swedish Church, most of the Swedish Free Churches and other christian communities, and it was handed over at the end of November by the Chairman of the Council, the Rev. John Sjögren. This was the first official function attended by the Crown Prince.

Tibet

The British and Foreign Bible Society are sending a specially bound and inscribed copy of the Tibetan Bible to the Dalai Lhama. The volume will be bound in red morocco leather. The Lhamas in many of the Tibetan monasteries have already received copies of the Tibetan Bible.

United States of America

The extension of the Worldwide Bible Reading programme concluded at Christmas time has covered an unusually wide range of people, according to a report of the *American Bible Society*. More reports of union services and community observances have been received this year and many ministers have written to the Society in appreciation of the Bible Sunday materials provided. The report continues :

" From Japan our souls are inspired by this news : ' We are sending the posters in our language to 3,000 churches and Christian organisations all over Japan.' Added to 3,000 posters in the Korean language printed in the United States and shipped across, were 3,000 more ' blank ' posters, with no English wording, supplied for further use by the Japan and the Korean Bible Societies.

" Bookmarks—150,000 of them— in the Spanish language were printed in the United States this year for the first time, though the Latin American Agencies again provided most of their own materials for indigenous use. There was much more comment about Bible reading in both religious and secular foreign-language magazines .....

" Greater mention on television, national radio stations and local broadcasts was given than in any previous year. From enthusiastic persons in active Bible classes to passive patients in hospitals, the bookmarks were read. During the twenty-four hours of Thanksgiving Day it is conservative to say that an average of a hundred people each second of the twenty-four hours commenced reading the Psalm for the Day. For Universal Bible Sunday 4,000,000 of our responsive Readings had been mailed to churches on request. Church bulletins issued by denominations were in many instances prepared especially for Bible Sunday.

" In such manner does Bible use march on. Bible services in the armed forces ; editorials in the press ; cartoons, stories in magazines, advertisements in newspapers, posters in libraries—all took an upswing this year, and already some people have written about next year ..... "

■

The place of the Bible in Christian education was the central theme of the annual meetings of the National Council of the Churches of Christ in the

U.S.A., Division of Christian Education, which met in Columbus, Ohio, in February.

The theme of the 15 simultaneous meetings, each lasting three days, was "The Word of Life; Know It, Live It, Share It." 50 communions were represented among the 1,700 delegates from every state in the Union and from Canada.

Topics of addresses at the Leadership Education Section meeting included: understanding and using the Bible, the place of the Bible in Christian education, and the romance of making the English Bible. Contrasting approaches to the Bible in Christian teaching were considered by the Professors and Research Section.

Distinguished Bible scholars took part in the meetings and the general session on February 12th emphasied the Bible, looking toward the nation-wide observance of the Revised Standard Version of the Old Testament.

Yugoslavia

As part of the measures separating the theological faculties from the State school system, the teaching of the Scriptures was abolished in all schools in Slovenia and Croatia on 1st February. It was replaced by the teaching of ethics. In future, the Scriptures will be taught only in churches on the condition that the freedom of religious education shall not be misused by priests for political propaganda aimed against the existing order in Yugoslavia. All abuses in this regard will result in forfeiture of right of such priests to continue the teaching of the Scriptures to children.

United Bible Societies

The following information has just come to hand about the number of languages into which the Bible, in whole or in part, has been translated as at the end of December, 1951. The figures were collated by Miss Margaret T Hills, the Librarian of the American Bible Society.

Languages in which the whole Bible has been published ...	195
Languages in which a complete New Testament has been published	252
Languages in which at least a Gospel or other whole book has been published	602
TOTAL LANGUAGES in which some part of the Bible has been published	1,049

The whole Bible was published for the first time in 1951 in four African languages: Ogowé Fang, Kikuyu, Luba:Katanga and Ragoli.

New Testaments were published for the first time in 1951 in Laizo:Chin (Burma), Eastern Lisu (Yunnan), Haitian Creole (West Indies), Masana (French Cameroons), Moru (Sudan), Rundi (Belgian Congo), Shanga (Mozambique) and Mixteco (Mexico), while the fact of the publication of the Sahidic Coptic New Testament in 1911-24 was recorded for the first time.

Gospels were published during the year for the first time in 14 *new languages*, as follows :

Atsi	Mark	Burma
Bunnun	Matthew	Formosa
*Chaouia	Gospels	North Africa
Chin : Ngawn	Mark	Burma
Chin : Zotung	Matthew	Burma
*Gouro	Mark	Ivory Coast
Kharia	John	Assam, India
Naga : Konyak	Mark	Assam, India
Nuba : Moro	Mark	Sudan
*San Blas (Cuna)	Mark	Panama
*Tzotzil	Mark	Mexico
*Ubir	John, Epp.Jn.	Papua
Zangskari	John	Kashmir, India
*Zapotec : Sierra Juarez, Puebla Atepec	Matthew, John	Mexico

*These languages were previously included under 'Selections.'

A Gospel and several Epistles had been printed, some as early as 1940, in Paite (Manipur, India) by the North East India General Mission, and the Bible Society in India has now issued a Paite New Testament. This language is, therefore, a new one for the Bible Society.

There are now 85 languages in which short passages or collections of passages have been published, but in which no complete book of the Bible has appeared.

Roman Catholicism

Austria : A Roman Catholic Church paper in Vienna has been exhorting its readers " to throw away Protestant editions of the Bible, and if possible to burn them," lest they should be poisoned in heart and mind. The periodical affirms that there are not a few places where these editions are " known to be inaccurate, to contain translations of a Protestant character or to omit single verses and sentences."

Bishop D. May wrote immediately to the editor of this newspaper, asking him to name the allegedly false translations or the omitted verses. It would be perfectly understandable for the Prelate to wish to destroy books which attacked or derided the teaching of the Roman Catholic Church, " but it is something different," he pointed out, " to invite people systematically to burn ' heretical ' books, thus making the Holy Scriptures an object of destruction, as though it were just a question of destroying evil literature."

U.S.A. : Under the auspices of the Roman Catholic Bible Society in the United States, a Bible Week was held from February 10th—16th. This was the first of its kind, although for ten years past the Roman Catholics have observed Septuagesima as Bible Sunday.

AN EXPERIMENT IN CO-OPERATION

William C. Somerville

IN Scotland the Bible Society has not been called on to appoint its own colporteurs, for there are others already engaged in carrying the Scriptures and Christian literature to people in the Scottish country-side, namely, the colporteurs of the Scottish Colportage Society and of the Scottish Evangelistic Council. The Bible Society is of necessity vitally interested in this work, and makes a generous annual grant to each of these Societies. It is also represented on a Joint Consultative Committee which meets twice a year to plan the colporteurs' activities and to hear reports. Last December this Committee had a most interesting meeting with Dr. A. M. Chirgwin, whose studies promise to be a very great help in re-establishing the work of colportage as a means of Christian witness in Scotland.

I say 're-establishing,' for the day was, fifty or sixty years ago, when there were well over a hundred men in regular, full-time employment, and when there were no lowland dales or highland glens too remote to enjoy their visits at regular intervals. One of my own boyhood memories is of an uncle coming home of an evening carrying his heavy leather pack, though it was not so heavy as it had been in the morning when he set off on his round. It was hard work, but the colporteur was a respected member of the community and the books he sold did much to build up the character of Scotland's youth.

Since the beginning of the present century the number of colporteurs has been falling steadily, until to-day the two Colportage Societies between them employ only five full-time men and an additional eight or ten young men and women (mainly students at the Bible Training Institute in Glasgow) during the summer months. There are many reasons for this, including improved travel facilities so that people are not so isolated as they used to be, the existence of more booksellers' shops in country towns and villages, the discontinuance of family worship in so many homes, and, particularly in recent years, the rise in the cost of living which has made it very difficult for the Colportage Societies to give their men, especially their married men, a living wage. The numbers have dropped, but the need for the colporteur has not ceased. Experience has shown that the men who are left are still able to make good sales, especially Mr. James Clark, who runs a van so that he is much more mobile and able to carry larger stocks. A display window and film and loudspeaker equipment are of great assistance, while a bed inside makes the van a shelter for the night when necessary. A second van, similarly equipped, will be on the road very soon.

These vans will undoubtedly help to carry the Scriptures to the people, but what are two in a territory as large as Scotland? It was to study this problem more fully that a meeting was arranged between representatives of the Colportage Societies, the Bible Society, and the Home Board of the Church of Scotland. Three decisions emerged which, I believe, will be for the benefit of the work as a whole. Other Bible Societies may also find in them something worth trying.

(1) An effort is to be made to arrange that colporteur and church shall work together. A scheme is being adopted whereby the Colportage Societies will send advance notice of colporteurs' visits to ministers of all non-Roman denominations in the particular area concerned. Each minister will tell his congregation that Mr. 'So-and-So' is to be in the area and encourage people

to take the opportunity of buying from him the Bibles and other Christian books they may need. (Among other things, this intimation will clearly distinguish the *bona-fide* colporteur from other less desirable persons.) In return, the colporteur will do what he can while on his rounds to help the minister. For example, he will report if he comes across someone without a church connection who shows interest in religious matters.

(2) The Church of Scotland arranges each year for a number of 'area campaigns' in different parts of Scotland. The Rev. D. P. Thomson, who is in charge, has worked out over the years a very worthwhile type of campaign. It lasts anything from three to six months and calls for large-scale team action from the members of all the churches in the area, not just Church of Scotland ones. It has been arranged to try the experiment of attaching a full-time colporteur to a campaign team. The first trial took place in February in the town of Kirkcaldy in Fifeshire, and the colporteur was Mr. Clark with his Bible Van, who was referred to earlier. In spite of difficult weather, Mr. Clark found plenty of scope for his particular calling. His sales were about normal, but he found it thrilling to be a member of a team instead of being quite on his own as he usually is. The van was obviously a great asset, and Mr. Clark was able to take on various speaking engagements which might otherwise have had to be declined. A second experiment along similar lines is due to take place shortly in Ayrshire. Mr. Thomson feels that the colporteur's best contribution may be made as one of those engaged in follow-up work, going round homes in which people have already expressed a desire to learn more about the Christian way. A colporteur calling just then would be provided with an excellent opportunity to introduce a copy of the Bible into such a home and to give advice on how to begin reading it.

(3) I believe the ultimate solution to the problem of colportage in Scotland will lie in the contribution which can be made by part-time or spare-time colporteurs such as are already in action in many other parts of the world. Individuals who have worked with campaign teams frequently come forward with an urge to serve the Lord Jesus Christ in some specific calling. A number are set on the road to the ministry or the mission field. But there are many others who can serve Him best by staying just where they are, at their normal places of work, witnessing for Him among their own circle. It has been arranged that some in this last category should be invited to try spare-time colportage as an additional outlet for their spirit of service, working under the joint guidance of the campaign follow-up committee and one or other of the Colportage Societies. The outcome is being awaited with great interest.

THE PLACE OF THE BIBLE IN THE CHURCHES OF JAPAN

Tsunetaro Miyakoda

I

THE first work the Protestant missionaries did when they came to Japan 92 years ago was the translation of the Bible into Japanese. The first complete Japanese New Testament came out in 1880. The whole Bible translation was completed in 1884.

This early translation of the Bible and an exclusive emphasis on Bible teaching by Protestant pioneers, laid a sound foundation for the Christian Church in two particulars.

(1) By presenting the Bible as the centre of the New Religion, Christianity was introduced to the intelligent Japanese as a noble religion, in comparison with the other religions which were mainly based upon ritual, cults and superstitions. Books, through the influence of Chinese learning, were highly esteemed among the Japanese. Although it was listed among pagan books, the Bible had been treated by scholars as a kind of sacred book.

(2) By emphasising the Bible and its teaching as central in the new religion, Protestantism has been accepted mainly by the intellectual—the educated—and the middle classes.

The above two points have served to keep the Protestant church faithful to its fundamental teachings. Church members number 300–500,000 to-day. This means that there is one Christian for every 200 of the population, which totals 83,000,000. Though a minority, they have been true to the fundamentals of the faith. The word " Christian " has never lost its prestige through the years. The main work of the churches has been centred in the study, expounding and interpretation of the Bible. Bible classes have been the most important feature of the Church's work. Prominent statesmen, businessmen, scholars, whether Christians or not, have mostly had the experience of attending some Bible classes during their student or younger days.

English Bible classes have proved an attraction to the young people. You will be interested to know that three great Christian movements started from Bible classes led by foreign laymen in the early days. The Kumamoto group by Captain Janes, the Sapporo group by Dr. Clark (an engineer) and the Yokohama group by Dr. Brown and Dr. Hepburn. In the younger churches such as the Japanese, evangelism includes all of the Church's work. The Alpha and the Omega of the Protestant churches in Japan is evangelism. And evangelism means the study and interpretation of the Bible. The Church may be criticised as being too narrow and too intellectual as a result of the emphasis upon studies. Yet this has been the fact. The Y.M.C.A. and Y.W.C.A. sometimes criticise the churches for their narrowness and puritanism, yet even the Y.M.C.A. and the Y.W.C.A. and similar Christian organisations have adopted Bible classes as their central task in Japan.

It was the Y.M.C.A. that started to organise 300 Bible classes, mainly among business-men and workers after the war, throughout Japan. Even the Christian Women's Temperance League after the war built its work by organising Bible classes in various places. Therefore, in their evangelistic activities, denominations have made the local churches distributors of the Scriptures. The churches have been sellers of the Bible along with the bookstores. Scripture distribution by the churches has been a very special feature since the war. According to the Rev. Kashiwai, Vice-Chairman and General Secretary of the Church of Christ in Japan (United Church), 52% of the present-day attendants in the churches are new post-war members. These new members got their Bibles at the local churches. More than that, at present many of the churches have started to sell the Scriptures as a part of their aggressive evangelistic campaigns.

Every year, Japanese churches or the National Christian Council have invited many outstanding evangelists from abroad. Scripture distribution has been a part of these evangelistic campaigns, through the churches and through colporteurs. The Japan Bible Society has a corps of 150 colporteurs and of these 150, 60 are at the same time pastors of local churches and two-thirds of the circulation accomplished by colporteurs has been by these 60 men.

As a principle, the pastors serve as the head of groups of Bible distributors in the churches. These groups are sometimes composed of two or three Church members and sometimes even more. In one church, 50 members are participating in Bible distribution. We have 3 first-rate colporteurs. They are all young, active pastors. Each of them has given the young members in his church a fine training for this work. These young men and women go out, led by these able pastors. Last year, the Rev. Okamura sold 260,000 copies of Scripture. The Rev. Tanikawa's group sold 142,677 copies ; the third group, led by the Rev. Sumita, disposed of 93,739 copies. The year before last, his group sold 117,997 copies. Dr. Stanley Jones, at his farewell meeting following his second visit to Japan, reported that the most successful meeting of his three months' campaign was the one in Chiba city, 50 miles from Tokyo, where a splendid preparation had been made by the Church members of the city through the distribution of the Scriptures to the citizens. All the meetings were held at the City Hall and it was filled with earnest seekers. Dr. Jones had a record number of converts at those meetings. The leader of that successful campaign was a young pastor named Okuyama, one of our diligent pastor-colporteurs. Let me just finish this section by relating one more active phase of Bible-selling by the churches.

Nearly ten churches have been rebuilt since the war with the funds which their Church members raised by selling Scriptures. Of course, they are not cathedrals. I have heard criticism of the churches that have emphasised the sale of the Scriptures, but all the pastors with whom I have talked have said that they had engaged in this work because they had been welcomed as sellers of the Scriptures wherever they went.

II

(1) The Protestant Church has obtained a strong footing among the educated classes, and Bible study has expanded on a large scale. Yet, on the other hand, ground has been lost among the common people—especially in the rural areas. At present, 97% of the Christian churches are in the cities, while only 3% of them are in rural areas. The Bible has been read by the educated people, but has not been read by the common folk. Then, with the propaganda of anti-Christian ideas among the common people, by Shintoists, Militarists and Buddhist priests, the Bible is looked upon as the book of a foreign religion which has no relation to their lives. At times, it has been attacked as harmful to the people. One of our colporteurs told of his pre-war experience : one day he succeeded in selling a copy of the Gospels to a young woman in the Hokuriku district, where Buddhist influence is strong. Later, this young woman waited for him outside of the town and asked him to take the book back, even if its cost were not returned. Her parents were so angry because she bought that book. After the war, circumstances changed a great deal.

(2) There have been strong groups of Bible students from the beginning of the Protestant movement. Such groups have come especially from Dr. Clark's students. Mr. Uchimura was a prominent representative of this type. They have had no relation with the churches. They have come from outside. With the spread of higher education during the past 80 years, Bible students who are unrelated to any church have increased in number. They call themselves Christians and are proud of their separation from the churches. To-day they number some 50,000.

Along with these sincere groups, there have also been may Bible students—or Bible readers—who have been out of touch with the churches. The Bible has been read by many people as a book of culture or of moral teachings like the books by Confucius. We must not forget, in addition, the influence of English literature upon Bible reading, since English has been the first-required language in Japanese high schools. English has been truly loved and studied by the Japanese. Thus there were a great many Bible students outside of the Church even before the war. These trends have been strengthened, to a great extent, since the end of World War II.

The hunger for the Bible, especially after the War, has been heightened as a basis of moral authority as a result of the decline of the Emperor's authority, which had formerly served as a standard. Many people have turned to the Bible as an authority on morals and for consolation in the suffering caused by the War. Some have taken the Book because it is the Book upon which the Americans have been dependent. To-day, many new seekers (especially young people) are coming into the churches as a result of the collapse of the pressure of Shintoist, Militarist and Feudalistic ideas. People have begun to read the Bible without any fear. Wherever our colporteurs go, they are welcomed. Every time we advertise in the local newspapers, we receive many requests for Scriptures. We have been engaged in a ten million copies distribution campaign for three years. This will end by the close of March. I must confess that we have not been able to keep up with the demands of the people.

III

(1) Statistics show that comparatively more New Testaments have been handled than Bibles. At several meetings I have asked about this. Many pastors have admitted that they use the New Testament almost exclusively at their meetings. They say that they are so busy instructing the new young members of the churches, 52% of those who attend being new. For that reason they introduce them directly to the New Testament.

Now, six years after the War, they say they are ready to use the Old Testament as well. In addition to the fact that the use of the Old Testament has been neglected by the pastors, there is at present a tendency to buy the New Testament not only because it is cheap, but because it introduces people directly to the heart of the Gospel. The Japanese have no chance to get Bible education in the home, except through the Sunday schools. The Old Testament is said to be difficult to approach and hard for the common people to understand. Japanese pastors and teachers feel that it is their responsibility to teach the whole Book to the people, or at least to the Church members.

(2) Japanese churches and Christian schools came up against a big problem after the War because of the language reform that was introduced by the Government. The number of Chinese characters which were used had to be greatly decreased. A colloquial (Ko-gotai) language style was adopted both for official and ordinary usage. This reform was applied from the grammar school right up to the high school. Therefore, the present-day school children do not understand the Bible we have at the moment, for it is written in the classical style and uses many Chinese characters. The Sunday School Department of the N.C.C. and the Christian Educational Association urgently asked the Japan Bible Society to start Bible revision as quickly as possible.

Thus, revision of both the Old and New Testaments was started last year. Scholars are devoting their full time to this work of revision. Our plan is to finish this work in three years. At present, 10 months after we started the work, we have received a request from the Church that a portion of both the New and Old Testaments be published for the use of boys and girls.

(3) Expenses for publishing, colportage and revision have been met by the American Bible Society and the British and Foreign Bible Society. Our many-sided work cannot be pushed forward without help from these mother societies. Yet one of the Japan Bible Society's tasks will be to encourage the Japanese churches to take responsibility for this work. We are glad to report that the Japanese churches have gradually started to wake up to this responsibility. The number of churches that contributed to the last Bible Sunday increased over those of the year before.

Along with the churches' contributions, we are confident that we will also be able to get contributions from Christian groups outside of the churches. In this way we hope to open the way for these people to share in the responsibility for God's great cause.

DEVELOPMENTS IN LITERACY

Olivier Béguin

IN 1948, the Rev. W. J. Platt prepared the first survey of literacy ever made for the Bible Societies. In this he had the help of a specially appointed Research Department and he was able to point to many new developments in this field. The core of this report was published in the second issue of the Bulletin.

On several occasions at U.B.S. meetings, it has been suggested that this subject should not be overlooked and that, as far as possible, further information should be collected and circulated. However, it is very seldom that one comes across news or statistics on literacy progress and the information is generally scattered here and there in a number of reviews or information bulletins, the primary aim and purpose of which lie in very different spheres, such as economics, politics, general education and so on. It is not easy, therefore, to collect accurate information. Even education officers are not always in a position to give satisfactory figures about the progress of literacy or the percentage of children attending school in their own areas of responsibility.

A certain amount of research has been undertaken of late by the secretariate of the U.B.S. and we give here a summary of the results of this study for three well-defined groups of countries :

(*a*) The British administered territories in Africa
(*b*) The Near East or Bible Lands
(*c*) Latin America.

These notes are in no way exhaustive ; they only aim at showing the general trends of the developments and the main difficulties encountered in the fight against illiteracy.

The British Administered Territories in Africa

In 1944, the Colonial Office in London issued a White Paper : " Mass Education in African Society," outlining a plan for teaching 40 million illiterates in one generation. In the majority of the territories this plan began to be worked out locally in five or ten year plans. In 1948, when Mr. Platt's survey was made, only a few concrete steps had been taken by the regional authorities. At present, in the majority of the territories, the plans have received some implementation. The campaigns are, however, still in an experimental stage or on a limited scale in most areas, with the exception of Nigeria, the Gold Coast and Northern Rhodesia where efforts have been undertaken on a larger scale. Nevertheless, the British territories in Africa remain in the vanguard of the fight against illiteracy in Africa.

The language areas touched so far by the literacy campaigns are the following :—

Basutoland :	Suto (Sesuto).
Gold Coast :	Dagbane ; Ewe ; Ashanti : Fanti ; Ashanti : Twi.
Nigeria :	Addo (Bini) ; Efik ; Etseko ; Gbari ; Hausa ; Ibo ; Munchi (Tiv) ; Yoruba.
N. Rhodesia :	Bemba ; Kololo (Lozi) ; Nyanja ; Tonga.
Nyasaland :	Zomba District dialects.
Sierra Leone :	Kono ; Limba ; Mende ; Temne.
Tanganyika :	(Ki)Arusha ; (Ki)Gogo ; (Ki)Swahili ; Districts of Ukere, Mwanza, Tunduru, Kisarawe, Lushoto.
Uganda :	(Lu)Ganda ; (Lu)Gisu ; Nkole ; (Lu)Soga.
South Africa :	Pedi ; Suto ; Tonga ; Tswa ; Venda ; Xosa ; Zulu.

From the information contained in the reports and answers which the Educational Officers in the various territories under British control most kindly sent to the U.B.S. headquarters in reply to our enquiries, and in other documents which were also consulted, the following remarks may be made as a general summary of the experiences gained in the present drive against illiteracy.

(*a*) The necessity of adequate staff and sufficient funds is, of course, absolutely fundamental and in some cases the lack of the one or the other has been decisive in preventing any progress in literacy work.

(*b*) The adult population has not always shown itself very keen on learning to read and write. It is indicated in a survey of the Hausa area in Nigeria, that not more than 60% of the illiterate male population has been willing and able to learn and this is considered a relatively high proportion in the African field. A more serious instance in Tanganyika shows that of about 60 registered adult education classes, only 10 have continued to flourish. The same report draws attention to the necessity of preventing children from 'invading' classes intended for adults. In Nyasaland a U.N.E.S.C.O. Pilot Project has unfortunately failed and another attempt is not proving very successful. In some areas nothing has yet been done, but on the other hand in the Gold Coast the co-operation of the population seems to have been acquired and one of the main incentives has certainly been the political evolution which has led that country to relatively complete political independence. Over a thousand educated people in Togoland and 800 in Ashanti have been given training for leadership in mass education work during the last three years.

(*c*) The collaboration of the missionary societies in literacy work is stressed in most of the reports received. On the whole it must be noted that the

perhaps too individualistic 'each one teach one' method, mainly sponsored by Dr. F. Laubach, the great missionary pioneer of literacy, has not met with a very large response and that any literacy campaign of size or importance must, if possible, be organised within the framework of a larger scheme for social and economic development. This, of course, does not apply to whatever progress may be achieved by the 'each one teach one' method in the Christian section of the population, where the convert's desire to read the Bible for himself is a powerful incentive for him to learn to read. This appears clearly from the fact that a greater readiness to learn is found in areas where the influence of Christian missions (mainly non-Roman Catholic) has been felt, than in Moslem or pagan areas.

(*d*) The consequence of this is that when figures are given for the number of new literates, they are rather small, and most of the reports call for a careful re-planning before any further development takes place in this field. As the report from Nigeria puts it : "Adult education programmes have now become rather a problem of good organisation than one of stimulation of the interest of the people."

The chiefs and other people's representatives must first of all be interested. Teachers have then to be carefully prepared and trained. Only then can a really successful campaign take place.

(*e*) Experience has made clear that any one local campaign, if it is to be intensive, should be limited in time to about four months. Post-literacy classes may be organised afterwards in order to maintain interest in reading and writing, thus limiting—to a certain extent—its relapse.

It is in this sphere particularly that the churches and the missionary societies are called upon to take a large share of responsibility, and through them the Bible Societies will have a great opportunity for the circulation of illustrated Gospels in large type. Suitable literature for the new readers is still very scarce, even though in one or two areas the authorities seem to have made exceptional efforts to produce some appropriate manuals and booklets.

(*f*) The reports, on the other hand, show a remarkable increase in the number and percentage of children attending school. In only one case has the 50% mark been reached (Mauritius) ; a few of the regions have attained over 40% (Basutoland, Northern Rhodesia, Gold Coast and Nyasaland). This means that about 40-50% of the school age population (generally reckoned from 6-16 or 7-17, or about one-fifth of the population) is registered in school every year. But most children stay only a few years (2-4 or 5). This means, therefore, that about 60-70% of all children attend school for a period between 6-16 or 17 years of age. This figure might be higher if the non-aided schools could be included in the statistics. Unfortunately, information is very scanty and unreliable on that point. Furthermore, it should be remembered that very often these unaided schools are more in the nature of kindergartens and do not keep their pupils on until they reach the stage of literacy. In rough figures, about 2.8 million children were enrolled in the primary schools of the African territories in 1950 as against 1.75 million five years earlier, an increase of 60%.

It is quite evident from this information that the effort to put the White Paper of 1944 into effect has mainly been concentrated on the schools where, after all, the future of Africa is to be found.

(*g*) It is therefore encouraging also to know that most schools are in the hands of missionary societies which sometimes receive government subsidies. Generally speaking the reading of the Bible or parts of the Bible, is included

in the school syllabus. This is true also of state schools, with the exception of those in Tanganyika. Here again the Bible Societies are presented with a tremendous challenge and opportunity.

(*h*) The proportion of men in adult education classes and boys in schools is still generally much higher than that for women and girls. Special efforts have been made in one or two instances to reach more adequately the female population (e.g. in Sierra Leone the teaching of more than 300 'Sande' girls who belong to a society with secret rites).

From these few remarks it is already quite clear that, although quicker progress in the fight against illiteracy may be expected in the future, it will still be a long time before even the British controlled territories in Africa can be reckoned among the literate countries. This does not, however, make the challenge to the churches and to the Bible Societies any less urgent, for it is now and not in ten years' time that the new literates have to be taken care of and supplied with appropriate copies of the Scriptures, if we do not want them to fall from the world of ignorance into the world of false doctrines.

The Bible Lands

The countries included under this heading correspond roughly to those of the two American Bible Society and British and Foreign Bible Society agencies, Bible Lands North and South, excepting Greece and Bulgaria. This region has for centuries and indeed for thousands of years in the past been the seat of the most evolved civilisation of past ages, and it is certainly sad to see that now these countries count among the most backward and undeveloped in the world of to-day, particularly from the point of view of literacy.

Many reasons have been given for this state of affairs : the yoke of Islam, the difficulties of Arabic script, the Ottoman rule in the nineteenth century, the social status and organisation, nomadism. It is not our aim here to analyse in what proportion these various elements enter into this backwardness ; but we must be aware that several of them are still determining factors in the present situation.

Indeed, after World War II, when many of these countries which, after the First World War had been "mandated" to France and the United Kingdom, were granted full freedom, a new attitude towards literacy was to be noticed. The governments realised that general education would have to be one of the main tools in a national rebirth. The way had already been shown twenty years earlier by Atta Turk when he brought the Ottoman Empire to an end and inaugurated the Turkish Republic. Primary education was in those days already one of the first aims of the young republic, and indeed the percentage of literacy in that country to-day compares favourably with the figures for the other countries of that area.

Education in Turkey was made compulsory and free. Most of the other governments have now followed suit, but just as for Turkey, it be will a long time before the law can be fully enforced. The lack of teachers, lack of buildings and accommodation, and the lack of funds slow down the development of general education. However, each year the statistics show an increase in the number of schools available and in the number of children enrolled in them (more than doubled within the last ten years) which is rising more quickly than the increase in the population (a little over one-fifth in ten years, for instance).

In spite of the efforts deployed in the field of primary schools, the percentage of illiteracy is decreasing very slowly. The reason for this is the almost complete absence of literacy campaigns among adults. With the exception of Egypt, where a serious effort has been undertaken (about half of the new literates every year since 1949), the governments seem to be devoting very little attention or energy to this problem. Nearly all these countries have been visited by Dr. Laubach, who has drawn up charts, composed primers, instructed teachers and launched campaigns. The governments seemed to be interested. Yet the 'each one teach one' method has not caught the imagination of the people and only limited occasional activity in missionary circles has been reported, and no other incentive has been found which would encourage people to take the trouble to learn to read.

With regard to the relative percentages of literacy, it is interesting to note that literacy is slightly higher among Orthodox populations than among Moslems ; this, however, is hardly true for Ethiopia where the parish schools in which liturgical prayers and passages of the Bible are learned by heart are very similar to the Koran schools.

The Lebanon, and even more so the new State of Israel, forms a kind of oasis in that educationally dry area. The Lebanon has a Christian majority ; the Jews, all over the world, have always belonged to the educated classes of the population.

The information which we have been able to gather for this section is far from complete. But it gives, as it stands, an adequate outline of the actual situation. Complementary figures and data would not alter the picture to any great extent.

The Near East is very much in the news at the present time. Political tension which degenerates into a rearmament race is not favourable to the rapid development of instruction. Similarly, the resurgence of orthodox Islamism is not likely to encourage individuals and governments to undertake general education. This means that for the Bible Societies there is little likelihood that the demand for copies of the Scriptures will increase considerably, except perhaps in Egypt where the adult literacy movement is well established and where a sufficiently strong national Christian body, if it really makes the study and circulation of the Scriptures its business, may succeed in persuading over-sensitive national feelings that the Bible is not a western or a foreign Book.

We might think that Ethiopia presents a more hopeful picture. There are indeed many features in the situation to nourish such a hope. The main difficulty, however, is the policy adopted by the government of imposing Amharic as the only Ethiopian language in which printing can be allowed. This means that large sections of the population must learn a new language before they can think of learning to read and this postpones to a very distant future any intensive development of literacy in that country.

Under these circumstances, the problem of literature for new readers remains relatively limited. The use of the Arabic language in several countries of this area makes possible a better co-ordination of effort. Gospel sheets have been published by the American Bible Society in Arabic and are used in all areas where this language is spoken, and they have been well received. As in other areas, the Scripture Gift Mission has also circulated in some languages of the Near East various Scripture pamphlets and cards, but none specially intended for new literates.

The wish has been expressed that one Gospel in larger print and with illustrations should be available, but it is also noted that any large distribution of Scripture portions could easily be considered as subversive action ; furthermore, it would be practically impossible for the Bible Society agents and colporteurs to trace the new literates, unless they have been taught by missionaries ; but in that case copies of the Scriptures would already be in their hands.

It does not seem, therefore, that the Bible Lands at the present moment offer a great and challenging opportunity to the Bible Societies in regard to the circulation of the Word of God among new literates. The picture would certainly be different and brighter if the historic churches, whose positive influence has already been noted in those lands, were to take active and resolute interest both in evangelism and in the fight against illiteracy, as we all hope will happen one day in the not too distant future.

Latin America

At the end of the Second World War the Latin and South American nations suddenly awoke to the necessity of developing instruction and education among their citizens. The proportion of illiterates was relatively high in most of these countries (between 40 and 50%), although lower than the percentages in Asia or in Africa. Since the end of the war most countries have made a remarkable effort to reduce their percentage of illiteracy. But there are still roughly 70 million illiterates in the whole of Latin America, among them 19 million children of school age.

The visits of Dr. Frank Laubach to Latin American countries in 1943 and the following years have certainly helped a great deal towards that evolution in the minds and policies of their leaders. Another great impulse has also been due to the fact that Mr. Torres Bodet, a former minister of education in Mexico who, in the forties, started a mass education movement in his country, became secretary general of U.N.E.S.C.O. and has given a place of primary importance to mass education and to the fight against illiteracy in the U.N.E.S.C.O. programme.

In the summer of 1949 a group of educationalists and of official representatives from almost all the Latin American countries met for five weeks in Rio de Janeiro to discuss methods to be used for teaching illiterates. The "global method" (starting from the sentence down to words and single letters) was opposed to the "Laubach method" (based on the association of signs with sounds) and finally recommended. On the impulse and with the help of U.N.E.S.C.O., a training centre is to be opened in Patzacaro (Mexico) to give a thorough preparation in mass education and the fight against illiteracy every year to about 100 students from all parts of Latin America, during the next ten to twelve years.

Nearly all reports received indicate progress in the field of the fight against illiteracy. It has, however, been difficult to collect accurate statistical figures. In most cases our correspondents, the Bible Society agents, have only been able to secure general indications, but no figures from the government offices. We have tried to supplement these indications by information drawn from various sources, but the result is not as satisfactory as it could be.

However, the material gathered here gives an adequate picture of the important developments which are taking place in Latin America in the effort to combat illiteracy. This picture should be related to the astonishing progress of evangelical missions in South America and to the stiffening opposition of Roman Catholicism and of some governments.

There is a wide open door for evangelical missionary action, but also the danger that the door may soon close. Thousands of people are learning to read, but there are few books or booklets for the new literates to read. If the missionaries are hampered in their work, the Book may continue its ministry, if it has already been widely circulated. Several correspondents note that this would be the opportunity for a widespread action of distributing large-type illustrated Gospels, or even selections, in an attractive presentation. Here is a challenge and a call for a special effort on the part of the Bible Societies. Is it possible to answer them ?

As far as our information goes, literacy campaigns are mainly undertaken in Spanish or Portuguese ; but some developments are also taking place in the Indian languages such as Quechua in Guatemala.

It should also be noted that almost all the members of the evangelical churches are literate and that in such circles the 'each one teach one' method has met with complete success. Of course the governments follow a more methodical course for their campaigns and have generally begun by preparing large numbers of teachers who are being sent all over the country to organise classes. The problem of supervision appears to have been solved in some cases. On the whole, however, in spite of campaigns in many places which spread like wild-fire just after the war, it does not seem that the stage of experimental planning has yet been passed, except in a few countries like Mexico (where over 3 million adults learned to read in six years), Brazil (where 2 millions were enrolled in 3 years, half of whom completed the course), or even Guatemala (where about 25,000 people are expected to become literate each year).

The general trend, however, certainly points towards a quick and energetic development of literacy campaigns and it is not unreasonable to suppose that within 10 to 15 years the great majority of illiterates will have disappeared from South America. Needless to say, this evolution presents the evangelical churches and more particularly the Bible Societies with a most urgent challenge. Strategically, South America is perhaps becoming at the present time the most important field for quick, energetic and widespread action. Technically and economically, these countries are developing rapidly and an extensive desire and opportunity for instruction is bound to follow. This is an opportunity for making the Word of God known to these people and for preparing the ground for an evangelical Christianity which will want, in its turn, to take a share along with the other churches in the proclamation of the Good News all over the world.

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